GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETIN

Prepared Weekly by

THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

(Founded in 1888 for the Increase and Diffusion of Geographic Knowledge)
General Headquarters, Washington, D. C.

for

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Education

CONTENTS FOR WEEK BEGINNING MARCH 29, 1920

1. New Zealand, Where Cannibals Devised Fireless Cookers.
2. Baseball and the Olympic Games.
3. Dakar: May be the Liverpool of Africa.
4. Our Celestial Neighbors: Venus, Mars and the Moon.
5. Banat: A Political Football of Europe.

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A POPULAR ESKIMO SPORT (See Bulletin No. 2)

No, the lady is not being punished for witchcraft; she merely is being crowned Queen of Love and Beauty by an Alaskan swain. The photograph was taken by a missionary at Point Barrow. There it is the custom for the Eskimo whaler making the biggest catch to be honored by the tossing of a woman in a blanket. Formerly this ceremony was observed after a victory in battle. The blanket is held taut by Eskimo boys and men. The more blase belles always land on their feet; but a subdebutante is likely to have her head turned or her neck broken if this honor is too suddenly thrust upon her.

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New Zealand, Where Cannibals Devised Fireless Cookers

EVEN the New Zealanders, so far out of the beaten track of world events that their institutions and customs have developed along unique lines, and so self-sustaining that the World War scarcely affected their food supply, are not isolated enough to escape the universal pinch of high living cost, according to recent dispatches.

Imagine boot-like Italy inverted, with the tip of her peninsular toe pointed toward the eastern coast of Australia, some 1,000 miles distant, and you gain a picture, both in size and contour, of New Zealand.

Long accounted a social science laboratory and political experiment station, some physical features of New Zealand are equally unusual. Zoologists found there a tailless bird, evolutionary souvenir, they believe, of the now extinct wingless moa, ranging in size from that of a turkey to a super-ostrich height of twelve feet from head to ground. Then there is a caterpillar which dies but to live again in the form of a plant, which blossoms and goes to seed.

Boiling Springs Spout Near Frigid Lakes

In the instep of the island boot is an area equal to that of Connecticut and Delaware together, where boiling springs spout from shores of ice cold lakes, hissing pillars of steam and columned vapors puncture the surface, phenomena comparable only to the steaming, vaporous Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes, near Mt. Katmai, Alaska.

Here, as in Alaska, it is a case of "cherchez le volcan," and the volcano is to be found in the extinct crater of White Island. For the thermal springs district extends into the sea, and emerges again in the barren peak a thousand feet high, hooded in billowy veils of white vapor.

Attracting the publicist because it has the newest governmental experiments—compulsory arbitration, old age pensions, tax exemptions on small farms, for example—New Zealand interests the geologist for an opposite reason, because it is one of the oldest portions of the earth's solidified surface.

Seldom is a clearer illustration to be had of the effects of geography upon a people. In fact the demonstration was duplicated in New Zealand, once with the Maoris, and then with the English colonists. The Maoris, among the most remarkable of all savage tribes, are Polynesians. They came, some 500 years ago, some say from Tahiti, and found the aborigines "unappetizing, but, as the event proved, not indigestible."

Hardships Developed Savage Skill

The climate of New Zealand, with its "elastic air and perpetual motion," is more stimulating than the enervating air of most Polynesian islands, food was not waiting to be plucked from trees, and shelter had to be provided. Hence the latent instincts of these savage cannibals were developed here as

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A MAORI GIRL (See Bulletin No. 1)

Showing the simple and artistic native costume of this New Zealand people, who rank among the most remarkable of all savage tribes

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Baseball and the Olympic Games

NOW comes the month when the Greek influence upon art, drama, and literature seems a pallid matter to the schoolboy who is attacked with the spring fever for baseball.

But if there is one heritage from the Greeks America may claim to have appropriated fully, it is the Greek love of sport. Nor is baseball inferior to the athletics of classic Greece, according to a communication to the National Geographic Society by J. R. Hildebrand, which says:

"Some historians assert that the Greek games formed the foundation for the lucid thinking and the lofty art concepts that made her product classic. Yet the Olympian and the Pythian games at their best afforded no such spontaneous, yet intricate, interplay of muscle and mind as baseball.

"Baseball needs no advocate. A game which holds sway among a highly civilized people is its own defense. Still it is interesting to compare baseball with the Greek games in two points wherein baseball is criticized.

Wild Olive Not Only Reward of Hellenic Champion

"Some hold that professional players of today reap rich rewards in comparison with the garland of wild olive, often thought to have been the sole prize of an Hellenic champion. Others argue that professional baseball affords exercise for 18 paid players and mere amusement for thousands of inactive spectators in the grand stand.

"The first objection is based on a misconception. If hope of reward robs baseball of its sporting merit, the Greek festivals also must lose prestige. An Olympic winner's wreath was only his service badge. He was banqueted for weeks, taken back to his native city in a chariot, and sometimes the walls were torn down for his triumphal entry. Usually he lived thereafter at public expense. He was showered with costly gifts by friends. Cicero complained that a Greek champion won more honors than a Roman general.

"While the competitor got no share of the gate receipts in the ancient world series, his 'home town' was bound to heap fortune upon him, in addition to the tributes of admirers. His fame was good municipal advertising at a time when bill boards did not mar the landscapes. Athens regarded an Olympian victor worth a standing reward of 500 drachmas, and free rations for the rest of his life.

Ten Months Was Greek Training Period

"The reason for these material rewards is not far to seek. A Greek could no more train ten months to compete in the games, and continue his normal pursuits, than can a modern baseball player.

"The second objection, that of too few participants, applies only to the professional game, whereas baseball still would merit claim to being a national

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nowhere else and, even before the English came, the Maoris had gable-roofed houses, with elaborately carved posts and lintels, and interiors decorated with designs of crude beauty.

Women were needed in the struggle against harsher natural forces, so they won positions of esteem, and were represented in tribal councils. They were ingenious enough to bake meats on heated stones; but not too civilized to roast especially tough cuts of human flesh on this aboriginal fireless cooker. They alone, among the Pacific islanders, discovered how to weave. Yet they knew not the use of minerals, and their leviathan canoes, lashed together, were constructed with tools of stone, shell, bones, and even of human teeth.

European discovery of the islands is attributed to Tasman, in 1642, but exploration did not take place until the time of Captain James Cook, 150 years later, while colonization was delayed until twenty years before our Civil War.

Colonization Resembled That of United States

When colonization did take place it resembled the settlement of the American colonies, in that settlements were made in half a dozen places, instead of being promoted from a central base, according to the usual British method. The colonizers are said to have profited by a study of the mistakes of England which brought about the American Revolution, and so well did they apply the lessons that the far-away island today is one of the most loyal portions of the British empire. This fact was attested by the way New Zealanders far exceeded their expected quota of troops in the World War.

A chief figure of the colonization was Edward Gibbon Wakefield, as bizarre a character as his association with such a distinctive dominion would imply. After serving a prison sentence in England for abducting an heiress by means of forged letters, he was debarred from the Parliament upon which he later exerted an indirect but potent influence, to aid in carrying out the colonization plan now associated with his name. A fundamental part of his policy was to avoid great landed estates, the promiscuous giving away of land to ne'er-do-wells and adventurers, and finally, though his early disgrace still drove him to work under cover of pseudonyms and agents, he ranked as the foremost colonial authority of his day, as a zealous reformer and idealist.

It was due to Wakefield that men of substance gained a foothold in New Zealand, that industry rather than exploitation became the motif of the colony, and that the fundamental aim of the government still is that of "no millionaires and no paupers."

The island population, exclusive of Maoris, now exceeds a million. The Maoris, numbering about 50,000, have risen to a position of eminence, being represented in the legislative assembly, in the cabinet, and having physicians, attorneys, and other professional men of note among their number.

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Dakar: May be the Liverpool of Africa

DAKAR, which is seldom heard about, promises to be a focal point in the expected rivalry of European countries and the United States for trade with South America—a possibility that everyone is hearing a great deal about just now.

Interest in Dakar arises from dispatches telling of proposed Paris to Brazil and Madrid to Brazil rail and water routes, and also of a contemplated trans-Atlantic aeroplane flight from Dakar to Pernambuco, Brazil.

A glance at the map will show why Dakar holds a strategic position for South American communication. The distance from Dakar, on the tip of Cape Verde, to Pernambuco, the easternmost city of the South American continent, is but 1,715 miles as compared with 3,053 miles from New York to Liverpool.

Already Dakar is a port of prime importance for vessels which ply between European ports and either South America or southern Africa. Recognizing this fact the French have improved the harbor, with its naval and dry dock, arsenal, torpedo boat basin, and facilities for transferring cargo from boat to train. Work on a deeper harbor and a larger dry dock now are under way.

French Seat of West African Administration

Dakar also is important to its own hinterland, for it is the seat of administration for all the French possessions in West Africa, which include, beside Senegal, of which Dakar is the chief city, French Guinea, the Ivory Coast, Dahomey, French Sudan and Mauritania.

The visitor today would find a thriving city of about 25,000 persons, with wide, well laid out streets, a large technical school, hospitals and workshops, and he might have trouble imagining himself in Africa were it not for the preponderance of swarthy natives as compared with only about 3,500 Frenchmen.

Less than half a century ago travellers brought back different reports. Then children could have been seen running naked about the unkempt streets, and eating, pig-like, from the same bowl. Mothers performed their work with babies strapped, astride, across their backs, and one writer reported that children could be bought from willing mothers for a few francs, though he did not state what one might want with the purchase.

Wore Rings on Figures and Bells on Toes

The men, literally, wore rings on their fingers and bells on their toes, not to mention amulets, beads, coins, and a surprising assortment of trinkets, mostly regarded as charms.

But the Senegalese natives are far from savage, except in their ability to fight, as many American boys learned who observed them in France. The

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pastime since it is played by practically every American boy who has full use of two arms and two legs.

"It has been noted that sports of a nation afford an almost invariable barometer of its progress in civilization. Baseball is one of the most complicated and highly organized pastimes known to any people. It is a veritable instrument of the most delicate precision in the world of sport. A South Sea islander no more could play it than he could operate a linotype machine or deftly handle the paper money in a bank teller's cage.

Baseball a Museum of Ancient Pastimes

"Yet the instincts baseball satisfies—the zest of racing to a goal ahead of the ball, the deep satisfaction of diverting a swiftly moving object to serve his own ends, the mere impact of the speeding sphere against the instrument he controls, bagging the spheroid as it flies afield, the suspense of nine men as they await the batter's fate—each and all find their counterpart in play as old as animals that walk on two feet and have enough gray matter atop their spinal columns to control nature's laws for their human purposes.

"The foot-race ever was the most popular of the twenty-four Olympian events. The Romans batted balls with the forearm swathed in bandages, and the Gilbert islanders wrap cocoanut shells with cord so they will rebound to a blow from the open palm; Homer's princess of Phaeacia is represented in the Odyssey as jumping to catch a ball tossed by her maids of honor; and the Chinese had a game in which a suspended ball was kept hurtling to and fro by blows from the players. Perhaps there was more sport than economy in the old Dutch habit that Washington Irving tells about, of having a lump of sugar swinging above the dinner table from which various guests at a New Amsterdam banquet took successive nibbles.

"Throwing, catching, and running are as old as man; but it took the American genius for play, no less distinctive than the American genius for science, industry and commerce, to weld these motifs into a game that puts a premium on skill, yet admits of infinite variety; that rawest youth or trained athlete may play; and that Presidents and office boys steal away to watch."

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Our Celestial Neighbors: Venus, Mars and the Moon

SENDING wireless messages to Mars and Venus, and the possibility of projecting a rocket to the moon, are subjects of recent speculation which have excited keener interest in our solar system.

"Mars always challenges interest," says William Joseph Showalter in an article in the National Geographic Magazine.

"Its day is about the same length as ours, but its year is nearly twice as long. Although astronomers generally take less interest than laymen in the surmise as to whether other planets and stars are inhabited, since they, more than laymen, realize that this is a problem that must in all human probability remain unsolved, the question is more often asked about Mars than any other planet.

"Venus was an unusually interesting object in the sky during July of last year. Not again until February, 1921, will it appear as bright and fair in the evening sky. It has phases like the moon, and these can be seen even through a good field glass. Its day is believed to be the same length as its year, which is 224 of our days.

Has Mars Ice-Capped Poles?

"It is quite generally believed that Mars has ice-capped poles. The telescope reveals white spots at the poles that have every appearance of being like our ocean Polar region. They advance toward the equator in winter and retreat in summer. In the summer of 1916, Pickering, who, with Lowell, has led the school of astronomers who believe they can see canals on Mars, said that he found the white caps stretching farther down toward the equator than he had ever seen them before.

"He said that if there was any connection between the weather of Mars and that of the earth, the winter of 1916-17 would be the coldest in many years. And it was. May it yet be possible to do long-range weather forecasting on the earth by studying the waxing and waning of the ice-cap on the South Pole of Mars?

Graphic Picture of Solar System

"Perhaps our most graphic picture of the solar system is given by Herschel. Imagine a circular field two and a half miles in diameter; place a library globe two feet in diameter in the very center; eighty-two feet away put a mustard seed. The globe will represent the sun and the mustard seed Mercury.

"At a distance of 142 feet place a pea, and another at 215 feet. These will represent Venus and the earth, both as to size and distance. A rather large pinhead at a distance of 327 feet will speak for Mars, and a fair-sized tangerine a quarter of a mile distant will stand for Jupiter. A small lemon at two-fifths

UMI

West African tribes, such as the Berber, the Serer, the Fulah, and the Mandingo, all of which are represented in Senegal, are among the most advanced of the African natives.

The Berbers, for example, have a history, dating back to pre-historic times, which mystifies ethnologists. They are believed, by some experts, to have been at one time the masters of the Mediterranean. Today many of them, were they attired as we are, might pass for Americans. Their skin is light, and some of them are blondes.

Many times have the Berbers been conquered, driven out of their homesteads, and, like the Jews, have become strangers in new lands, but they always maintained their racial identity, their physical characteristics, and a persistent love of freedom. Their women, like those of ancient Sparta and modern Russia, have fought by their husbands' sides, and their morality may be judged from the fact that the death penalty is administered for adultery. They have what amounts to universal male suffrage, through an assembly of all males, and the equivalent of universal military training, since each boy is equipped, when sixteen, with arms which he must be ready to use until he is sixty.

Worship Animals and Reverence Sharks

A novice can tell a light skinned Berber from a Wolof, "black of the blacks." Both Dakar, and St. Louis, former capital of Senegal, are in the Wolof region. These ebony-hued folk worship animals, revere sharks especially, but their poetic imagination is illustrated by the ceremony still preserved in crowning the King of Cayor, an old state recognized by the French government. After election the monarch is presented with a vase in which are seeds of all the plants grown in the kingdom, signifying that he is "lord of the land."

In Dakar, too, towering head and shoulders above the French, and well above the natives, may be seen Serers. Their worship holds the snake in veneration, and they believe in transmigration of souls. Six feet, six inches, is no uncommon height for them.

Perhaps the most intelligent of all the Senegalese natives are the Fulahs, whose folk tales betray lofty ideals and poetic imagery that is comparable with early Greek and Norse lore. Their horsemanship is famous, and their cavalry noted for daring and valor. The intelligence of their women, and the respect accorded them, is attested by the proverb, "Let a female slave enter a household and she soon becomes mistress."

It was the Berbers whom General Faidherbe, the French governor, had to subdue in the fifties of the last century, before he could accomplish the inland advance of the French and assure protection for the coast settlements. Thus he paved the way for the founding of Dakar, in 1862. That city's commercial importance dates from the building of a railway line connecting it with St. Louis, 163 miles to the northeast.

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Banat: A Political Football of Europe

BANAT, in southeast Hungary, another obscure place of Europe which won world attention because of conflicting territorial claims, is rich in agriculture, minerals and history.

Political football of continental powers for centuries, battleground for armies that turned the course of European history, experiment station for early reclamation projects and scene of a pioneer "back to the farm" movement, Banat never has cut a large political figure on its own account.

The district derives its name from a form of government it never had. A territory governed by a "ban," who corresponds to the German "markgraf," or the early Polish "pan," meaning master or lord, was known as a banat under former Hungarian designation. Banats of Dalmatia, Bosnia, and Croatia disappeared during the Turkish wars but, curiously, the name clung to the counties of Torontal, Temes and Krasso-Szoreny, though this group never was ruled by a "ban."

Long referred to as "The Banat," the region today commonly is called "Banat." Sometimes it is described more exactly as "Banat of Temesvar," thus identifying it by its principal city, less than 200 miles southeast of Budapest.

Early Home of Representative Government

Temesvar, picturesque and busy before the World War, bears both scars and monuments of its eventful history. Its springs were known to the Romans. The Tatars destroyed it. Its diet was the foundation for the Hungarian representative system.

"Near Temesvar were defeated the peasant forces headed by Stephen Dosza, in their encounter with John Szapolyai, of Transylvania, four centuries ago. Dosza was captured, a throne of fire was built in mock honor of the 'king of peasants,' and as he was placed amid the flames a red-hot crown was set upon his head. Thus Dosza's name became a Hungarian by-word for heroism and, according to popular belief, Szapolyai was smitten with blindness for his cruelty.

"Today the crumbling walls of the inner city of Temesvar, from which radiate avenues, like wheel spokes, to four suburbs, bear testimony of the strong fortifications built by King Charles Robert, of Anjou, one of the most powerful monarchs of his day.

"Good Queen Bess" of Austrian History

"Rich agricultural lands about the city, and throughout Banat, recall the drainage of marshes, swamps and thick forests, instituted by Maria Theresa, the 'Good Queen Bess' of Austrian history, who, incidentally, almost accomplished the overthrow of Frederick the Great. She failed partly because Russia abandoned the allies of the Seven Years' War.

of a mile will play the role of Saturn, a large cherry three-fourths of a mile distant will answer for Uranus, and a fair-sized plum at the very edge of the field will proclaim Neptune.

Eighty moons would be required to make one earth. A player there could throw a ball six times as far as it can be thrown on American diamonds. A man weighing 150 pounds there would weigh 900 on the earth. The earth receives as much light and heat from the sun in thirteen seconds as it gets from the moon in a whole year."

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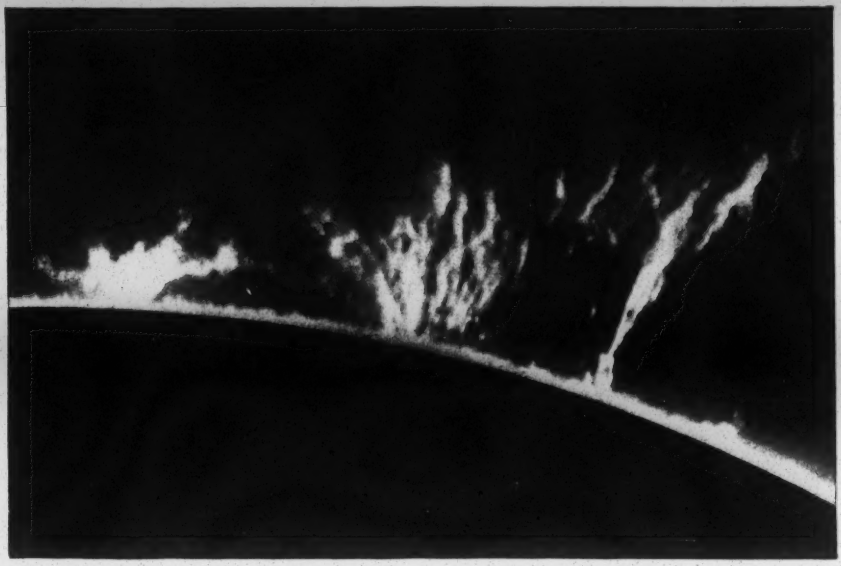

Photograph from Mount Wilson Observatory

TERRIFIC EXPLOSIONS OF THE SUN

Think of eruptions so powerful that they hurl streams of gas farther from the sun than the moon is from the earth, with a velocity frequently of a hundred miles a second and sometimes of two hundred. They leap up in great jets and flames, often changing their appearance greatly in a quarter of an hour. The highest "prominence" here depicted reaches about ninety thousand miles into space.

"An arsenal stands where Hunyadi Janos built a castle fifty years before Columbus set sail for America. That famous Hungarian general is credited with being one of the first military leaders to substitute strategy and organization for personal courage. So successful was his theory that he all but drove the Turks out of Europe.

"Conspicuous in Temesvar's principal square is a Gothic shaft, ordered there by Emperor Francis Joseph, in recognition of the city's defenders during a 107-day siege against Hungarian revolutionists of 1849.

"Banat covers an area a little smaller, and has a population slightly greater than the State of Maryland. Temesvar today has a population about equal to that of Waterbury, Conn., Elizabeth, N. J., or Fort Worth, Texas."

From "The Geography of Games." Used by Permission of National Geographic Society, © 1920.

LIBERIAN NATIVE SPINNING A GYROSCOPIC TOP

Two of the inexplicable facts of science are that the primitive tribes of Liberia should have discovered the principle of the gyroscope long before it was known to civilized peoples, and that the Australian natives, who have not even advanced to the agricultural stage, should wield the boomerang, involving another principle of advanced physics, in a manner that white men cannot equal. Both discoveries are excellent examples of how play may be the hand maiden to scientific achievement (See Bulletin No. 2). The Liberian keeps his top spinning in the air for any desired time by repeated strokes with the small whip in his right hand.